

The House Committee on Special Rules offers the following substitute to HR 121:

A RESOLUTION

Honoring Mrs. Rosa Parks, Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, Sr., Reverend Hosea L. Williams, Reverend Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, and Reverend Joseph Everhart Boone, recognizing their accomplishments as worthy of enduring memorials, and urging the placement of their portraits in the state capitol; and for other purposes.

PART I

WHEREAS, on December 1, 1955, seamstress Rosa Parks became a beacon of courage and a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement when she refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white passenger, accepting arrest, trial, and conviction rather than humiliation; and

WHEREAS, her quiet insistence on human dignity in the face of segregation, racism, and Jim Crow laws sparked the city-wide bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama, that brought an unknown young minister, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to national prominence; and

WHEREAS, alongside Dr. King, Rosa Parks became a leader and an icon in the national effort that resulted in the United States Supreme Court decision outlawing the segregation of city buses and gave critical momentum to the larger battle for civil rights; and

WHEREAS, Rosa Parks has been hailed as the "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement" in America for her pivotal act on that day in Alabama, as well as for her lifelong commitment to justice for black Americans; and

WHEREAS, Rosa Parks received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Nonviolent Peace Prize, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and a Congressional Gold Medal, and following her death at age 92, she become the first woman to lie in state in the United States Capitol Rotunda.

PART II

WHEREAS, Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, Sr., was born in Linden, Alabama, on March 11, 1926; and

WHEREAS, his involvement in political activism began while he was a student at Alabama State University when he led demonstrations protesting the lack of heat and hot water in his dormitory; and

WHEREAS, in 1951, he earned a Master of Arts degree in sociology from Atlanta University and then became pastor of the First Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama; and

WHEREAS, while living in Montgomery, he formed a close and enduring partnership with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

WHEREAS, in 1955, when Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus, Dr. Abernathy and Dr. King organized the bus boycott in Montgomery that ended when the United States Supreme Court affirmed the ruling that segregation on buses was unconstitutional; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Abernathy was the secretary-treasurer of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and assumed the presidency of the SCLC after Dr. King's death; and

WHEREAS, in May, 1968, he organized the Poor People's Campaign March on Washington, D.C., hoping to bring attention to the plight of the nation's impoverished, and for which he was jailed for nearly three weeks; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Abernathy, a giant in the civil rights struggle whose legacy endures, died April 17, 1990.

PART III

WHEREAS, Reverend Hosea L. Williams was an activist fueled by compassionate understanding and raw courage, whose activism over the course of a career that spanned four decades was always in service to God, his family, his people, the nation, and all of humanity; and

1 WHEREAS, it was in leading the historic march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on
2 "Bloody Sunday" in 1965 that Hosea L. Williams's courage was most evident, and that
3 pivotal event was instrumental in securing passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act; and

4 WHEREAS, Reverend Williams served with distinction as a member of the Georgia House
5 of Representatives from 1974 to 1983, representing District 54; and

6 WHEREAS, as chief executive of "Hosea's Feed the Hungry and Homeless in Metro
7 Atlanta," founded in 1970, Reverend Williams assumed responsibility for feeding thousands
8 of Atlanta's homeless during the holidays each year; and

9 WHEREAS, Hosea L. Williams served the citizens of the State of Georgia with great
10 effectiveness and unparalleled dedication and it is only fitting and proper that he be duly
11 recognized and honored for decades of service in devotion to timeless principles.

12 PART IV

13 WHEREAS, Reverend Dr. Joseph E. Lowery is one of the State of Georgia's most
14 distinguished citizens, a nationally recognized preacher, and a renowned civil rights leader;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, when *Ebony* magazine named him one of the nation's 15 greatest black
17 preachers, he was described as "the consummate voice of biblical social relevancy, a focused
18 voice, speaking truth to power"; and

19 WHEREAS, when the NAACP honored him at its 1997 convention, he was called the "dean
20 of the civil rights movement"; and

21 WHEREAS, as head of the Civic Affairs Association in Mobile, Alabama, he led the
22 movement for the desegregation of buses and public accommodations; and

23 WHEREAS, in 1957, he cofounded with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Southern Christian
24 Leadership Conference and served as its president and chief executive officer from 1977 to
25 1998; and

26 WHEREAS, Dr. Lowery led protests in Warren, North Carolina, against the dumping of
27 toxic waste in poor communities, which led to the environmental justice movement; and

1 WHEREAS, he served as pastor of Atlanta's oldest predominantly black Central United
2 Methodist Church for 18 years, and, from 1986 to 1992, he was the esteemed leader of the
3 Cascade United Methodist Church; and

4 WHEREAS, as convener of the Georgia Coalition for the Peoples' Agenda, he is a strong
5 force for election reform, criminal justice system reform, and government reform.

6 PART V

7 WHEREAS, premier clergyman and civil rights activist Reverend Joseph Everhart Boone
8 had a career that spanned nearly four decades, transforming thousands of African American
9 lives as he carried the message of economic dignity from the pulpit, through the streets, and
10 to the boardrooms of America; and

11 WHEREAS, Reverend Boone was a man of uncommon vision, charged and driven by
12 formidable dedication as he carried forth with unflagging courage his conviction that each
13 citizen has the right to dignified participation in the American economy's mainstream, both
14 as producers and consumers; and

15 WHEREAS, Reverend Boone's miraculous achievements included serving as Chief
16 Negotiator for Operation Breadbasket, the economic arm of the Southern Christian
17 Leadership Conference; presiding as Pastor at Rush Memorial Congregational Church in
18 Atlanta, the meeting and organizational base for the Student Non-Violent Civil Rights
19 movement, and at the First Congregational Church in Alabama, where he organized the first
20 "Selective Buying Campaign" in Alabama; acting as Director of the Metropolitan Atlanta
21 Summit Leadership Congress, Inc., during which time he was designated by Mrs. Coretta
22 Scott King to coordinate the first leg of the "Poor People's Campaign"; leading the P.J.
23 Woods Center for the Blind as its director, coordinating programs including a 24 hour
24 residential treatment facility; and persuading the FCC as the cochairperson of Atlanta
25 Against Unfairness in Broadcasting to condition license renewals for all major television and
26 radio companies on providing credible programming which is relative to the needs of black
27 people in Georgia; and

28 WHEREAS, Reverend Boone's career in public service earned him a distinguished series of
29 honors and awards, including "Civic Leader of the Year" in 1959 from the First
30 Congregational Church in Anniston, Alabama; "The Young Man of the Year in Religion" in
31 1964 from the Atlanta International Chapter of the Wise Men; The Excelsior Knights

1 Citizenship Award in 1967; an appointment by Governor Jimmy Carter to the Governor's
2 Council on Human Relations in 1971; WGUN's Outstanding Citizen Radio Award in 1971;
3 "Civil Rights Fighter of the Year" in 1975 from the Bronner Brothers; and the "Civil Rights
4 Award" in 1991 from Clark Atlanta University.

PART VI

6 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY that the
7 members of this body honor Mrs. Rosa Parks, Dr. Ralph David Abernathy, Sr., Reverend
8 Hosea L. Williams, Reverend Dr. Joseph E. Lowery, and Reverend Joseph Everhart Boone
9 for their gallant service to this state and this nation as leaders of the Civil Rights Movement
10 and in recognition of that service urge the Capitol Arts Standards Commission to authorize
11 the placement of a portrait of each of them on the second floor of the state capitol building
12 alongside the portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
14 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the public and the press.